Pritchard Mayor.

Martis secund. die Octob. 1683. *An. Reg. Regis* Car. 2. *Angliæ, &c.*

THis Court doth desire Dr. *Calamy* to Print his Sermon Preached at the *Guild-Hall* Chappel on *Sunday* Morning last, before the Lord Mayor and Aldermen of this City.

WAGSTAFFE.

Pritchard Mayor.

Martis secund. die Octob. 1683. *An. Reg. Regis* Car. 2. *Angliæ, &c.*

THis Court doth desire Dr. *Calamy* to Print his Sermon Preached at the *Guild-Hall* Chappel on *Sunday* Morning last, before the Lord Mayor and Aldermen of this City.

WAGSTAFFE.

A

SERMON

Preached before the

RIGHT HONOURABLE

THE

Lord Mayor,

And the Court of

ALDERMEN,

AT

Guild-Hall Chappel,

Upon the 30*th* of *September*, 1683.

By *BENJAMIN CALAMY*, D.D.
One of His Majesties Chaplains in Ordinary.

LONDON, Printed for *W. Kettilby*, at the *Bishops-Head* in St. *Pauls* Church-yard, 1683.

A SERMON

Preached before the

RIGHT HONOURABLE

THE

Lord Mayor.

And the Court of

ALDERMEN,

Guild-Hall Chappel.

Upon the 30th of September, 1683.

By BENJAMIN CALAMY, D.D.
One of His Majesties Chaplains in Ordinary.

LONDON, Printed for W. Kettilby, at the Bishop-Head in St. Paul's Church-yard. 1683.

Romans III. 8.

And not rather, as we be ſlanderouſly reported, and as ſome affirm that we ſay, let us do evil that good may come? Whoſe Damnation is juſt.

IT is on all hands agreed that the Doctrine, from which was raiſed this Impious and Damnable Concluſion mentioned in my *Text, Let us do evil that good may come*, and on the account of which it was father'd upon *St. Paul* as his Judgment and Opinion, was what he had ſome time taught concerning the Illuſtration of the Glory of the Divine Goodneſs and Mercy, in pardoning the greateſt ſins of Men. That which moſt prejudiced the *Jews* againſt this great Apoſtle, was his Preaching the Goſpel to the *Gentiles*; his departing from, and rejecting his obſtinate unbelieving Country-men, and receiving the uncircumciſed Heathen into the Church, tho' they had been guilty of the groſſeſt Idola-

 tries,

tries, and other enormous Vices which then reigned amongſt them, mentioned in the firſt Chapter of this Epiſtle. In defence of himſelf *St. Paul* uſed to plead, that the more heinous and provoking the ſins of the Heathen World were, the more glorious and reſplendent was the manifeſtation of the Divine Goodneſs, in offering them Pardon and Salvation upon the Terms of the Goſpel; and that it was the incurable perverſneſs of the *Jews*, who would not believe in *Chriſt*, which gave occaſion to this magnifying of Gods Grace towards the *Gentiles*.

Now theſe two things the Enemies of Chriſtanity were ready to conclude from this diſcourſe of *St. Paul*.

1. If this be ſo, that the ſins of Men give occaſion to the further manifeſtation of Gods Goodneſs and infinite Mercy, why then ſhould God puniſh the *Jews* or others for thoſe ſins which thus tend to his Glory? *If our unrighteouſneſs*, v. 5. *commend the righteouſneſs of God, what ſhall we ſay? Is God unrighteous who taketh Vengeance? (I ſpeak as a man)*: that is, I only now recite an Objection which ſome Men are apt to make againſt my Doctrine; Can God in juſtice take vengeance of our Unrighteouſneſs, when that ſerves to commend and magnifie his own Righteouſneſs?

The

The ſame falſe Inference he repeats again, *v.* 7. *If the truth of God hath more abounded through my lie unto his Glory, why yet am I alſo judged as a Sinner?* That is, If Gods faithfulneſs in performing his Promiſes made of old hath more abundantly appeared by reaſon of the *Jews* infidelity, if their refuſing the Goſpel hath contributed ſo much to the Honour of God, and the fuller diſcovery of his Grace towards Mankind, why then are they complained of, and condemned as Offenders?

To this Objection the Apoſtle doth not think fit to give an elaborate Anſwer, but only expreſſeth his juſt deteſtation of any ſuch wicked Concluſion, as ſome ill Men would draw from his Doctrine, *ver. 6. God forbid: For then how ſhall God judge the World?* Far be it from me to aſſert any thing that ſhould in the leaſt reflect upon the Impartial Righteouſneſs of the Supream Judge of the World.

The great God, who at firſt brought light out of darkneſs, and beautiful Order out of indigeſted Chaos, who by an Inviſible and Omnipotent Hand turns and winds all Things and Actions how he pleaſeth, and makes them often eventually ſubſervient and effectual to Ends clean contrary to their own proper tendency, and the intention of the ſubordinate Agents, will ſo manage and over-

rule even Sins and Impieties, the Rage and Malice, the Plots and Stratagems of wicked Men and Devils, that they ſhall all in the upſhot conſpire to the advancing and ſetting forth his own Glory: But in the mean time this is no thanks to wicked Men, nor any excuſe of their ſin; but is to be aſcribed ſolely to the irreſiſtible Power, and skilful Conduct of the Almighty Governour and Diſpoſer of all things both in Heaven and Earth. What Men Act purely to gratifie their own Luſts, to ſatiate their Revenge, or in order to the compaſſing their Ambitious, Covetous, or any other evil or miſchievous Deſigns, may yet be ſo ordered and controuled by the Wiſe Providence of God, as that at laſt it ſhall bring Honour to his Name, and great Benefit to others: But ſtill the wickedneſs, the guilt of the Actors themſelves, is not in the leaſt abated or mitigated by this good Effect, which follows wholly againſt their will and purpoſe.

I ſhall give an inſtance of this in that which is at preſent the great ſubject of our thoughts and diſcourſe. It is to be hoped, that our gracious God, who hath ſo wonderfully revealed the hidden and black Conſpiracies of deſperate Men againſt the Perſon of our deareſt Soveraign and his Government, will after ſuch a manner diſappoint

point their Bloody Devices, as not only to prevent the intended miſchief, but alſo to make this Helliſh Plot it ſelf in the end contribute to the greater ſecurity of our Prince, and to the eſtabliſhment of his Government both in Church and State, and that it ſhall ſerve to ſtrengthen and confirm that, which it was meant to ruine and overthrow: But all this doth not in the leaſt excuſe or juſtifie the Plotters themſelves, who juſtly ſuffer the utmoſt Vengeance, notwithſtanding this advantage we may poſſibly through Gods infinite Wiſdom, and the Care of our Governours, reap from their Treaſonable and Damnable Enterpriſes. Thus the *Jews* were worthily puniſhed for their obſtinate unbelief, though God without their knowledge, and againſt their deſign, made it an occaſion of diſplaying his Grace and Mercy to the *Gentiles*.

2. A further and worſe inference (if there can be worſe) drawn from *St. Paul*'s Doctrine, was this, If the Glory of God is ſo much advanced by the ſins of Men, let us then ſin freely without any dread or re morſe, for what need we fear or ſcruple doing that, from which ſo great good doth come? By this means we may do ſervice and bring Honour to God, ſince the greater our ſins are, the more will they illuſtrate and commend Gods Mercy in pardoning of them.

Now

Now this the Apoſtle in my Text firſt tells them is a *Slander*, or *Blaſphemy*, as the Original word ſignifies, a ſcandalous imputation faſtned upon him and his Doctrine, which he abhorr'd: Then he Cenſures the Doctrine it ſelf as Damnable, *whoſe Damnation is juſt.* Which words may ſignifie either of theſe two things.

1. If you refer them to the former part of the Verſe, to thoſe Slanderers of St. *Paul*'s Doctrine, then they ſignifie that ſuch Men who thus unjuſtly pervert and abuſe the Grace of God, by putting falſe Conſtructions upon, and drawing ſuch impious Conſequences from it, are guilty of a moſt Pernicious and Dangerous ſin.

2. If you refer them, as many do, and as I ſhall now underſtand them, to the wicked reſolution ſet down in the *Text*, *Let us do evil that good may come*; then they ſignifie that it is a Damnable ſin to commit any Evil, though thereby the greateſt Good might be obtained; which is the Propoſition I ſhall now Diſcourſe of; That we muſt not venture to do the leaſt Evil, no not for the ſake of the greateſt Good; and I am very confident you will all readily grant, that this point is very ſeaſonable now to be inſiſted upon.

For we need not Travel into Foreign Countries, we need not conſult the Chronicles of paſt Ages,

Ages, nor be beholden to Ancient Records, to fetch thence Examples of those who have done the vilest and lewdest things imaginable, and yet have cloaked all, and defended themselves by this Colourable Pretence, That what they did was for the Glory and Service of God, and the Good of his People. We have had too many sad Instances of this amongst our selves in this last Age. For have not the most Execrable Murders, Treasons and Villanies been acted in this Nation, and yet all pretended to be done for Gods sake, for the preservation of Religion and the Gospel, and for the Safety and Liberty of the People? The old Wheadling Pretences of all Sedition and Rebellion. But I shall not look back to former Times.

Have we not at this present Day heard of Men, who have undertaken the Assassination of the most Gracious and Merciful Prince that ever wielded the *English* Sceptre, and of his Royal Brother, the overturning the present Government, and bringing in all Confusion and Anarchy, and God knows what, (for no one can tell, and it makes every Honest mans Heart Bleed within him but to guess, what had been the fatal Consequences of such an Horrid Design, had not Gods good Providence, which hath all along been so watchful

watchful over our Soveraign, Blaſted and Defeated it) yet, is not all this Wickedneſs ſaid to have been contrived, and reſolved upon out of great love to, and concern for the Proteſtant Religion and Liberty of the Subject, and to ſecure us from Popery and Slavery? They, good Men! deſigned nothing but what was honeſt, for the Intereſt of Religion and the Nation, no matter what the Means were, that were uſed in ſo good a Cauſe.

In nomine Domini incipit omne malum, and I think I may truly ſay, that neither Ambition, nor Covetouſneſs, nor Pride, nor Revenge, nor Diſcontent, nor any other Luſt or Paſſion, that uſeth to animate Men to make Publick Diſturbances, have yet been the cauſe of ſo much Diſorder and Miſchief in the World, as hath been occaſion'd by a Popiſh or Fanatick Zeal for Religion and Liberty; and perhaps more Evil hath been done that Good might come of it, than upon any other pretence or account whatſoever.

This indeed is a weakneſs that moſt Men are more or leſs ſubject unto: When they are once ſecure of the goodneſs of the Cauſe they are ingaged in, and of the greatneſs and neceſſity of the End they propound to themſelves, their Eyes are ſo wholly fixed upon it, that they eaſily become

become leſs wary and ſollicitous about the Lawfulneſs of the Means they uſe for the compaſſing of it, and are apt in their heat to outrun or tranſgreſs the limits of their Duty. As it is with one who eagerly follows his ſport or game, when he is in cloſe purſuit he ſticks not at any bad road, he leaps over all that is in his way, and will ride over thoſe dangerous places, which at another time he would with the greateſt care have avoided. So is it with men, whom a blind Zeal, not cool Reaſon or ſober Religion moves, they are rid by an headſtrong impetuous paſſion, which violently hurries them through thick and thin, through lawful and unlawful; they ſwallow any Camel, ſo that they may at laſt obtain what they ſo earneſtly deſire. *Let us do evil, that good may come, whoſe damnation is juſt.*

In the proſecution of this Argument, I ſhall firſt of all explain the Propoſition, *That we muſt not do any evil, that good may come.*

Secondly, I ſhall prove it to you, and give you ſome Reaſons to eſtabliſh you in the belief of it.

Laſtly, draw ſome ſeaſonable Inferences from it.

1. For the Explication of this Propoſition, *That we muſt not do any evil, that good may come*, there need not many words.

By good here I underſtand whatever it is that is deſirable or for our advantage, either conſidered

as Men or as Christians, whether it relates to this life or next, whether it be publick or private, temporal or spiritual, whether it be our own or others; for the procuring of any, or all these good things, we must not do any thing that is evil.

What we call Evil is of two sorts, either Natural or Moral, or as it useth commonly to be expressed, the evil of pain, or the evil of sin; and of this latter, of sins are these words only to be understood. As for the former, outward temporal evils, which concern our Bodies or Estates, they must be chearfully endured and undergone in a good Cause, for a great End, rather than omit a necessary Duty, or commit a plain Sin; there being more real evil in sin, than in any outward pain or calamity that can befall us.

Now of things sinful, of which only I discourse, some are always such in all Circumstances; other things there are which are in their own Nature indifferent, but are evil and sinful only because they are forbidden by some positive *Command* of *God*, which therefore in a case of great necessity or charity, may be done for the sake of some good that follows. As we all know *David* and those that were with him, to save themselves from perishing by hunger, did eat of the Shew-bread, which otherwise was not lawful for them to eat, and yet were not blamed for it.

Be

Be pleaſed therefore to obſerve, that I ſpeak not now of the violation of ſuch *poſitive Commands of God*, as they are commonly called, which he himſelf hath declared are to give place to Works of mercy and doing good to our Brother; the breach of them in ſuch caſes not being ſinful; *God* himſelf diſpenſing with thoſe Laws in ſuch extremities: But I ſpeak now of things in their own nature and intrinſically evil, and which are forbid by *God* becauſe they are ſuch; not the leaſt thing which is evil in its own nature may be done, tho' for the procuring the greateſt good. Which I ſhall endeavour,

2. To make out to you by Arguments drawn from theſe four heads. Firſt from the nature of moral good and evil. Secondly, from the conſideration of *Gods* Providence. Thirdly, from the example of *Gods* Condemning and Puniſhing evil Actions, tho' donewith good Intention. Fourthly, from the pernicious Conſequences of ſuch a Conceſſion as this, that we may do evil for a good End.

1. This will appear from the nature of moral good and evil. It is an old Maxim you may have often heard of, *Bonum oritur ex cauſa integra, malum ex quolibet defectu.* To denominate an action morally good, there muſt be an Univer-

ſal Concurrence of all Conditions requiſite thereunto.

It muſt be good as to the Object or Matter, the End for which it is done muſt be laudable and worthy; it muſt be done after a right manner, in due Circumſtances, or elſe the Action cannot be ſaid to be good. But now it is not neceſſary that it ſhould fail in every one of theſe reſpects to make it evil; but a defect in any one of them certainly vitiates the action, denominates it morally evil, tho' in all other reſpects it be according to the Rule.

If the Object be lawful, the manner of the performance regular, and it be fitly circumſtantiated, yet if it be done for a baſe, low, wicked End, this undoubtedly quite mars and ſpoils the action, and renders it ſinful; and for the ſame reaſon, let the Intention be never ſo good and honeſt, the End we propound to our ſelves never ſo great and excellent, yet if we fail in the Object, if the thing we do is forbid by Gods Law, the Action, notwithſtanding the ſpecious pretence of the glorious End to which it is directed, is a vicious Action, and we are accountable to God for it as ſuch.

This a great Biſhop of our Church illuſtrates thus: *Any one ſhort Clauſe*, ſaith he, *or Proviſo not Legal*,

Legal, is ſufficient to abate the whole Writ or Inſtrument, tho' in every other part abſolute and without exception. A good Intention therefore can no more warrant an Action that is in it ſelf unlawful, than the goodneſs of the Matter can juſtifie what is done on a wicked Deſign.

Nay further, ſuch is the contrariety between the nature of good and evil, that what is really evil cannot be choſen as a fit means to produce any thing that is good, any more than darkneſs can beget light, or than falſe Premiſes can rightly infer a true Concluſion, or than (to uſe our Saviours Phraſe) *an evil Tree can bring forth good Fruit.*

God indeed (as I have already hinted) by his Omnipotent Wiſdom doth produce good out of evil, by the ſame word of Power by which he brought ſomething out of nothing; by which he can make things act contrary to their own Natures and proper Efficacy. But to do that which is really evil, in order to the obtaining of ſome real good, is as if a Man ſhould put his Hands into the flame to cool it; or it is juſt like the policy of thoſe Men, who would deſtroy the preſent Government to preſerve our Rights and Properties, and would pull down the Reformed Church of *England* for the defence of the Proteſtant Religion.

2. I argue further, that to do evil that good may come, is a great affront to, and distrust of the Divine Providence and Government of the World. So saith *Job*, cap. 13. 7. *Will ye speak wickedly for God, and talk deceitfully for him?* Doth he stand in need of our sins to help him out at a dead lift to bring his designs to pass? Hath not he taken sufficient care of, and made sufficient provision for us, unless we now and then stretch our Consciences in a case of extremity? Cannot he uphold his Church or preserve his Religion, without our venturing on a special occasion to strain a Point, and transgress our Duty for the sake of them? Was he overseen in the making of his Laws, not considering at first those inconveniences that might sometimes happen? As if what he had Commanded us might prove inconsistent with his own Glory, or the Interest and Safety of Religion, unless we in great prudence dispensed with his Laws in such Cases. Now this is not only a bold infringement of the Divine Authority, but also an unworthy Reflection upon the Wisdom of Gods Laws and Government.

This is evidently seen in those of the Church of *Rome*, who fondly imagining that our Saviour and his Apostles had not wrought Miracles enough for Confirmation of their Doctrine, have coined abundance

bundance of other Miracles, which they obtrude upon their eaſy Diſciples as true, by them to ſupply what was wanting in our Saviours. So leſt Hell and everlaſting Damnation ſhould not be ſufficient to ſcare Men from their ſins, they have added that gainful Invention of their Purgatory. Which *pious frauds* (as they ſometimes call them) are moſt highly diſhonourable to our Saviour and his Religion, intimating as if his Goſpel had been very ſhort and imperfect, unleſs ſome Menhad interpoſed their own Wit and Knavery to patch it up or compleat it.

Thus the Laws of our Chriſtianity plainly oblige us not to reſiſt Lawful Authority: But alas! This may poſſibly prove very dangerous Doctrine. What if the King turns Papiſt or Tyrant? What then ſhall become of our Religion and Property, if in no caſe we may reſiſt, if we have no other remedy but Prayers and Tears; if we are bound patiently and meekly to ſuffer thoſe evils, that may unjuſtly and contrary to Law be inflicted upon us by that Authority we are ſubject unto? And ſo to prevent this inconvenience, Men chooſe to correct the Rule of their Religion, to diſtinguiſh away Gods Law, rather than to truſt God with their Lives and Fortunes and Religion, in the reſolved doing of their Duty.

Let

Let us but ſuppoſe God to have done Wiſely, and acted Conſiderately in all that he hath Commanded or Forbidden us, and it muſt then neceſſarily follow, that we muſt never go againſt his Will, tho' it may ſeem to tend to never ſo great or good an End. Since he, who had a perfect Knowledge and Comprehenſion of all Events that either can or ſhall happen in the World, hath preſcribed us ſuch Laws by which we are always to govern our ſelves, for any one to think to pleaſe him, or to promote his Glory and Service by acting contrary to theſe, is ſurely the greateſt preſumption a Creature can be Guilty of, and a foul imputation and diſparagement caſt upon the Wiſdom of God.

When People are for taking the Church and Goſpel out of Gods Hands into their own particular regard, and will not think their Religion ſafe whilſt they defend it only by ſuch means as God allows of, unleſs they have ſome Tricks and Policies of their own, this certainly argues a baſe diſtruſt of the Divine Care and Providence.

3. Add to this the Examples that are in Scripture, of Gods Condemning and Puniſhing what hath been done againſt his Command, tho' with a good intention, and for a great and worthy end. I ſhall mention but two Inſtances, one out of the

Old

Old Teſtament, the other out of the *New*.

In the *Old Teſtament* (not to inſiſt on that memorable one of *Uzzah*, who dyed for ſaving the tottering Ark from falling) you find *King Saul*, 1 *Sam.* 15. receiving Commandement from God by the mouth of *Samuel* to deſtroy all the Poſterity of *Amalec*. He very zealouſly ſets about the work, and at firſt deſtroys all, both Men, and Women, and Cattel, according to the word of the Prophet. But afterwards it comes into his head, that this waſte was needleſly made, and for the ſins of Men why ſhould ſo many goodly Cattel be loſt? He reſolves therefore with himſelf to ſave the beſt and fatteſt of them, to offer them for a Sacrifice to God, when he return'd home with Victory. He thought he could order things a better way, that it would be more for the Glory of God for theſe Cattel to ſmoke in Sacrifice upon his Altar, than to be deſtroyed in a ſtrange Country. This one Act of Diſobedience to a particular Command of God, notwithſtanding the Piety of his Intention, coſt him his Kingdom. *Behold, to obey is better than Sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of Rams.*

The Example I ſhall give out of the *New Teſtament* ſhall be that of St. *Peter*, who out of great love to, and forward Zeal for his Maſter, when

our Bleſſed Lord was apprehended by the Miniſters and Officers of the Chief Prieſts and Elders, *drew his Sword, and ſtruck a Servant of the High Prieſts, and ſmote off his Ear.* It was done in defence of Chriſt himſelf; of the moſt perfect Innocence that ever appeared in the World. It was againſt unjuſt violence. His Sword was certainly drawn upon a more plauſible pretence, than any can happen in our Days: Yet mark, I beſeech you, our Saviours rebuke of him, St. *Math.* 26. 52. *Put up again thy Sword into his place, for all they that take the Sword ſhall periſh with the Sword.* Do nothing contra to Law, reſiſt not Authority, though it be to preſerve the Life of thy Lord and Saviour. *For all they that take the Sword,* who draw or uſe it, when it is not put into their Hands by thoſe that bear the Sword, by the Supreme Magiſtrate who hath the Power of the Sword, *ſhall periſh by the Sword,* fall themſelves by it, or incur the puniſhment of Death.

That which is uſually objected in this Caſe, is the Example of others mentioned in Holy Scripture, who doing things not ſtrictly juſtifiable, ſome things plainly againſt Gods revealed Will, yet have not been Condemned, nay ſeem to be Commended for them, on the account of the Goodneſs of the Deſign, or the Effect which hath followed. To which I ſhall return theſe two general Anſwers.

1. That

1. That the Case is not the same with us now, as it was with those who lived before the Law given by *Moses*, or as it was with the *Jews* under the Law. We are now to govern our selves only by the written Will of God, not expecting nor attending to any private motions, or incitations, or suggestions, especially when they lead to any thing contrary to what is Revealed to us. But it was not so before our Saviours time, when God did often discover his Mind, and give his Commands to private Persons by special Revelations to them, exciting and moving them to some particular Actions, which are no otherwise warrantable, than as they were done at the instigation, and by the direction of God himself.

Such were *Moses*'s killing the *Ægyptian*, *Phineas*'s slaying *Zimri* and *Cobsi* in their unclean Embraces, *Ehuds* stabbing King *Eglon*, *Elijahs* consuming by fire from Heaven the Messengers whom the King sent to apprehend him; these and the like Actions are no more Exemplary to us, without infallible assurance of the same Divine impulse by which these Persons were guided and acted, than *Abraham*'s Offering up his Son *Isaac*, or the *Israelites* spoiling the *Ægyptians* of their Jewels, can now justifie the Murder of our Children, or the Robbing of our Neighbours.

Nay, ſhould any one of us have any ſuch ſtrong motion or inſtinct upon his Spirit, inclining him to do any ſuch Action, he ought not to compare it with the private Commands given to thoſe Worthies, but if it prompt him to any thing forbidden by Gods Law, or that belongs not to his Place and Calling, he ought utterly to reject it as a Diabolical temptation.

2. As for other Actions recorded in Scripture, that were evil in themſelves, but yet were done for a good End, (where there was not this private Divine Warrant) they were neither commendable in them who did them, (tho' otherwiſe very Good and Pious Perſons) nor are they by any means imitable by us. I ſhall Inſtance in the famous caſe of *Lot*, when he entertained the Angels; who offered his Daughters to the impure *Sodomites*, *Gen.* 19. 8. that by them he might Redeem his Gueſts from the violation intended to them. Now tho' he was a ſingular good Man, and highly in favour with God, yet it muſt, I think, be ſaid that this was a fault in him, and he ought to the utmoſt hazard of his life, have defended both his Daughters Chaſtity, and his Gueſts too; and the proſtituting of one to ſecure the other, was not juſtifiable in him.

The ſame muſt, I think, be ſaid of the *Egyptian* Midwives. They were loth to obey the bloody Edict

Edict of King *Pharaoh*, and choſe rather to tell a lye than commit ſuch Barbarity as they were commanded, tho' in ſtrictneſs they ſhould have done neither, but peremptorily refuſed to have obeyed the King in this Matter, whatever outward evil they had ſuffered for it; and when it is ſaid, *Exodus* 1. 20. *Therefore God dealt well with the Midwives:* It is to be underſtood that he rewarded them for their tenderneſs and compaſſion towards the *Hebrew* Children, but not for the lye by which they excuſed themſelves to *Pharaoh*. *Non eſt remunerata fallacia, ſed benevolentia: benignitas mentis, non iniquitas mentientis.* All this I ſay, ſuppoſing theſe Women told a lye tho' ſome have quite otherwiſe interpreted their Words.

The hardeſt Caſe that I can think of is this of ſpeaking an officious untruth; when by a falſhood I may ſave the life of one or more Innocent Perſons, of my Prince, of my Father, or preſerve my Country, or the like. This for ſo great an End I ſuppoſe the beſt Caſuiſts do allow, but then it is not becauſe they judge it at any time Lawful to do Evil, or to tell a lye, that Good may come, but becauſe they judge ſuch an Officious untruth not to have in it the compleat Nature of a Lye, nor to be really Evil.

In ſhort, the Examples of the *Patriarchs*, and

Holy

Holy Men of Old, whose Praises are mentioned in Scripture, ought not to be followed by us, without comparing them with the Rule of our Religion; and whatever our Lord and Saviour hath plainly forbidden us, we are upon no exigence or necessity of Affairs to do it, whatever End it may serve, or whoever hath done it before us.

4. And lastly, I argue from the ill Consequences of such a Concession as this, that evil may be done for a good End. This one Principle sets us free from all Authority either Divine or Humane, and every one may do whatever he thinks fit, so his Intention and End be but good.

What we are to do, or what we are to avoid, if this Doctrine be admitted for true, we are not to learn from Gods Law commanding the one, or forbidding the other, but then every Man, according to his own Prudence, is to judge of Things and Actions by their Conveniency and Expediency to promote the Glory of God and publick Benefit; and so they are either Good or Evil according as they seem to us, and our own Judgment and Opinion is the measure of lawful and unlawful, and thus we are wholly (at least as to the Choice of Means) our own Masters and Law-givers.

Nay this Principle plainly overthrows all Justice and Faith amongst Men, all Peace and Security in Societies,

Societies, and makes all Government precarious and insignificant, since every one is an Arbitrary Subject, and may obey or resist the Laws and Constitutions of his Superiours, as they appear to himself to be for or against the common good, of which every Person must judge for himself; and every mans Life, Estate, and Fortune is at my disposal, if once I think it most for the Glory of God, and the safety of Religion, that they should be taken away.

You know our Saviour tells his Disciples of some that should arise, who would think *they did God good service in killing of them.* According to this Doctrine, St. *Paul* was very innocent when he was so mad against the Church, and breathed forth nothing but Slaughter and Destruction against the Christians: The Gun-powder Traytors deserved to be Sainted, the Murtherers of King *Charles* the First, and all our late Plotters of both sorts were Martyrs, if a good End or Intention would sanctify an evil action. But this is sufficient in so plain a matter.

What remains is only to draw some few Inferences from what I have already Discoursed.

1. Hence we may learn what is the true meaning of that Rule that is commonly given to direct our Practice, that *Of two evils the least is to be chosen,* which holds good only in these two Cases.

1. When

1. When two or more outward Evils are propounded to us, and we must undergo one of them, ordinarily we may chuse that which is least. This was the perplexity *David* was reduced unto, 2 *Sam.* 24. after he had so grievously offended God by numbering the People. God sent to him by the Prophet, and put it to his choice, *whether seven years of famine should come into his land, or he would flee three months before his Enemies, or there should be three days Pestilence?* Here *David* chose the last, as the least, saying, *Let us fall now into the hands of the Lord; for his mercies are great, and not into the hands of men.* Thus a private evil is to be suffered rather than the publick be endangered; and *Caiaphas* said true, tho' he applied it ill, that it was better one man should suffer than the whole Nation perish. Thus the most Tyrannical and Arbitrary Government is to be preferred before none at all, and to be oppressed under a Lawful Power, is better than Civil War and Confusion.

2. When two Evils are propounded to us, the one of Pain, which concerns our outward Bodies or Estates, the other something to be done that is plainly sinful, here we must chuse the greatest outward loss or trouble, rather than commit the least Sin; and this is our Wisdom so to do; a less Evil, when by it we avoid a greater, having in it the nature of Good.

This

This was the Rule the Primitive Christians practised and suffered by; when the severest Punishments, the cruellest Tortures, nay, not the appearance of Death it self in its uglyest visage, could ever make them consent to do any thing unworthy of their holy Profession. And there is nothing that redounds more to the Glory of God, and the Advantage of Religion, than the couragious suffering of Evil for Righteousness sake, infinitely more than the doing of any Evil, for the sake of our Religion, can ever effect. In these two Cases this Rule holds good. But,

3. In another Case, which is sometimes put, and to which this Rule is applied, it doth not hold at all. That is, when two Evils are propounded to us, both of them sinful, but one of necessity to be done, what must we do in this Case? May we chuse the less Sin to avoid the greater?

I Answer; no certainly. In this Case we must avoid both, and that it can never be allowed to commit a less Sin to avoid a greater, appears sufficiently from this one Reason, that if it were so, it would then be in the power of any Man to commit what Sin soever he pleased. For if I have a spite against any private Person, and would take away his Life, it is but Swearing or Vowing that I will either kill the King or him. Now it being a less sin

to kill any private man than the King, according to this Rule of chuſing the leaſt ſin, it would become lawful to do it; and by the ſame Artifice I might make any ſin I had a mind to commit innocent and allowable, by bringing it into Competition with a greater ſin.

But if two or more ſins are propounded to us, when we can chuſe any of them, we muſt chuſe none, nor can there be any ſuch real caſe wherein a man is under a neceſſity of committing ſome ſin or other, nor can any Circumſtances make it ſafe or adviſeable to venture on the leaſt ſin. So that in this inſtance this Rule, that of two Evils, that is of two ſins, the leaſt is to be choſen, does not hold.

2. From what I have ſaid I would take occaſion to intreat you all to beware of being led into, or ingaged in any Factious or Seditious Courſes, by the ſpecious pretences of Ambitious or Diſcontented men. For the carrying on any evil Plot againſt the Publick, it is abſolutely neceſſary that the true Ends be concealed, and ſuch offered to open view as may be moſt apt to take with the generality of men. An outward form of Godlineſs muſt be put on by all thoſe, who intend any very miſchievous and black deſign, by which they may gain Credit and good Eſteem to themſelves, and procure greater Countenance and Reputation to their Party.

Never

Never almoſt was there any great Sedition, Mutiny, or Rebellion contrived, or brought to any Fortunate ſucceſs, but by men pretending to greater Zeal for, and Care of Gods Honour, and love to Religion, and hatred of Errors and Abuſes, and concern for the Peoples good, and for preſerving their juſt rights, than other men; tho' all this while they ſecretly intend the inſlaving of them, and overturning all Law and Order: by which fair glozing ſhews and diſguiſes, *they deceive, if poſſible, the very Elect*, men otherwiſe ſober and Loyal.

At the beginning of our late troubles here in *England*, had thoſe who ſet on foot, and afterwards continued that unnatutal Rebellion, at firſt clearly told the world what they aimed at, the ſubverſion of the Ancient Monarchy, the taking away the Kings life, and baniſhing his Children, ſetting up themſelves, and ſubjecting the whole Nation to the power of the Sword; had this deſign been but ſmelt and ſuſpected at firſt, it had in all probability been cruſhed and defeated, as ſoon as diſcovered and believed. At firſt therefore nothing was talked of, but Religion, pure Ordinances, liberty of Conſcience, Freedom from Popiſh Innovations and Antichriſtian Ceremonies, true Goſpel-worſhip, a preaching Miniſtry, and when by ſuch pretences and Artifices many were engaged to their

ſide, then by degrees they began to appear in their own proper colours.

And have we not been lately in great danger of being cheated and undone the ſecond time by the ſame Arts, and Fears, and Jealouſies, and pretences of Reformation, and Religion, and almoſt by the ſame men too? And may we not at laſt hope, that this repeated Experience will open mens eyes, that they may ſee what tools they have been made by deſigning heads, how they have been cajoled and impoſed upon by fair pretences; and ſome perhaps honeſt men, ſo I would in charity believe, in the ſimplicity of their hearts, made uſe of to ſerve the moſt horrid and treaſonable Deſignes, which they never thought of, or little ſuſpected were driving on.

3. And eſpecially, Let us all now be exhorted to take great care that our Zeal for Religion never tranſport us beyond the bounds of our Duty.

Religion is certainly the greateſt intereſt and concernment of Mankind. Dearer it ought to be to us than our lives, for infinitely more than our lives are worth depend upon it. And of all the ſeveral Religions that are profeſſed in the World, I am in my Conſcience perſwaded, that which is taught here, and maintained in our Church of *England* as by Law eſtabliſhed, is moſt Divine, moſt

most Christian, most Apostolical and Primitive, most Pure and Rational, and for the continuance of this Inestimable Blessing of God amongst us, and to our Posterity after us (of which we have been for so long time thro' Gods Infinite Patience to us possessed) for this we ought surely to be very Zealous. No lover of God, or his own Soul, or his Country, can be indifferent or careless about such a Matter. And as for my own part I do profess to have, so am I sure all true Orthodox Sons of the Church of *England* must have, as ill thoughts and as great a detestation of the Popish, as of any other Sect whatever that calls it self Christian. The Church of *Rome* is undoubtedly the most corrupt and degenerate part of the Visible Church of Christ now upon Earth; and I thank God it is my Resolution, and it is the Resolution of all true and hearty Members of our Church, and I pray God give us all Grace to stand to it, if ever we be put upon the tryal; I say it is our Resolution to part with all that this World calls Dear, even Life it self, rather than ever own their Novel Articles for true, or submit to their Usurpations, or Communicate in their Idolatrous Worship.

But yet for all this, neither for the Preservation of this our most Holy and Excellent Religion professed here in *England*, nor for the keeping out Popery

pery it self, (and then I have named the worſt thing that I can) will I ever, by the Grace of God, go beyond the Duty of my Calling, and that Station Divine Providence hath placed me in, nor will I ever lift up my Finger, nor open my Mouth againſt the Lords Anointed, whatever his Religion may be, whether he hath any or none, whether he be a *Nero* or a *Conſtantine*, whether he Rules by Law or againſt it. We muſt not wiſh him Evil, no not ſo much as in our ſecret thoughts, whatever hard things we ſuffer from him; we muſt on no account diſturb or oppoſe his Government, or reſiſt his Authority, and if we have not opportunity of flying from ſuch a Perſecution, (as I now ſuppoſe, becauſe I would put the worſt Caſe that can happen) or cannot by prudence decline it, I know no other remedy the Goſpel allows us, but Meek and Patient Suffering for our Religion, after the Example of our Bleſſed Lord and Maſter.

This is the plain Loyal Doctrine of the Church of *England*, which her Miniſters have always Preached and Defended, both againſt Papiſts and Fanaticks of all ſorts, and for which ſuch an Out-cry and Clamour of late Years hath been raiſed againſt the Clergy. And whenever we Teach you otherwiſe, give me leave in Gods Name to charge you all to forſake us, and deſpiſe us at as high a rate as our greateſt

Enemies

Enemies now can do. Nay, if an Angel from Heaven preach any other Doctrine, let him be accurſed.

Zeal for the beſt and the greateſt things in the World will not excuſe private mens taking upon themſelves to reform publick abuſes, either againſt, or without the conſent of the Supreme Magiſtrate, nor will it hallow any action for which we have not ſufficient Warrant and Authority from Gods word. Ye remember the Anſwer which our Saviour gave to his Diſciples, when they called for Fire from Heaven to conſume that Village of the *Samaritans* that would not receive their Maſter, *Ye know not what manner of Spirit you are of.* They were much miſtaken when they thought they might do as *Elias* had done; that was no waies agreeable to that Meek and Lowly Spirit which our Saviours Doctrine was to beget in men, or to that taking up his Croſs which our Lord called his Diſciples unto, or to that Patience and Reſolution in ſuffering, by which Chriſtianity was to be propagated and glorified in the World.

For Concluſion of all, would we engage Gods Favour and Protection, that he ſhould continue to us thoſe ſingular Mercies we yet enjoy; let us then at all times adhere cloſe to our Duty, as well when it is againſt our temporal Intereſt, as when it is for it. Let us inviolably in all things obſerve the Commands of our Religion, not only propound good ends, but be

as careful to chuse Lawful means, and then God w
in some measure think himself as it were obliged
shew Mercy and Favour to us.

If ever any thing provokes God Almighty
bring those Calamities upon us, which we seem
much to fear, it is our using indirect unlawful mea
to prevent their falling upon us. And is it not th
with us at this day? For could our Common En
my, I mean the Papists, have ever invented a mo
successful Plot for the bringing in of Popery? coul
they have hoped for a better opportunity, or grea
er advantages, for the recommending and introdu
cing their Religion, than what the abominabl
Wickedness and Treasons of those who would b
accounted the greatest Zealots against it, have no
given them? By doing of such horrid Evils, unde
pretence that good may come, have they not give
the greatest Blow and Wound to the Reformed Re
ligion, and done their best to bring that misery up
on us, which they would be thought to have de
signed to have kept off?

The Lord still in his infinite Mercy continue t
preserve our most Gracious Soveraign, and th
Church, and these Kingdoms, from all either secre
Conspiracies, or open Assaults of Wicked Men, o
what Sect or Denomination soever, who think
Lawful *to do evil, that good may come, whose damnati*
on is just.

FINIS.

1694